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(54) **A chair for the beach or garden or the like**

(57) A chair (1) for the beach or garden or the like, which ensures that the position of the body of the user is anatomically correct, comprises a frame (2) and a

canvas-type supporting portion (3), the latter being an inflatable envelope (8), which envelope (8) includes a portion (8a) that forms a backrest (6) and a portion (8b) that forms a seat (7).

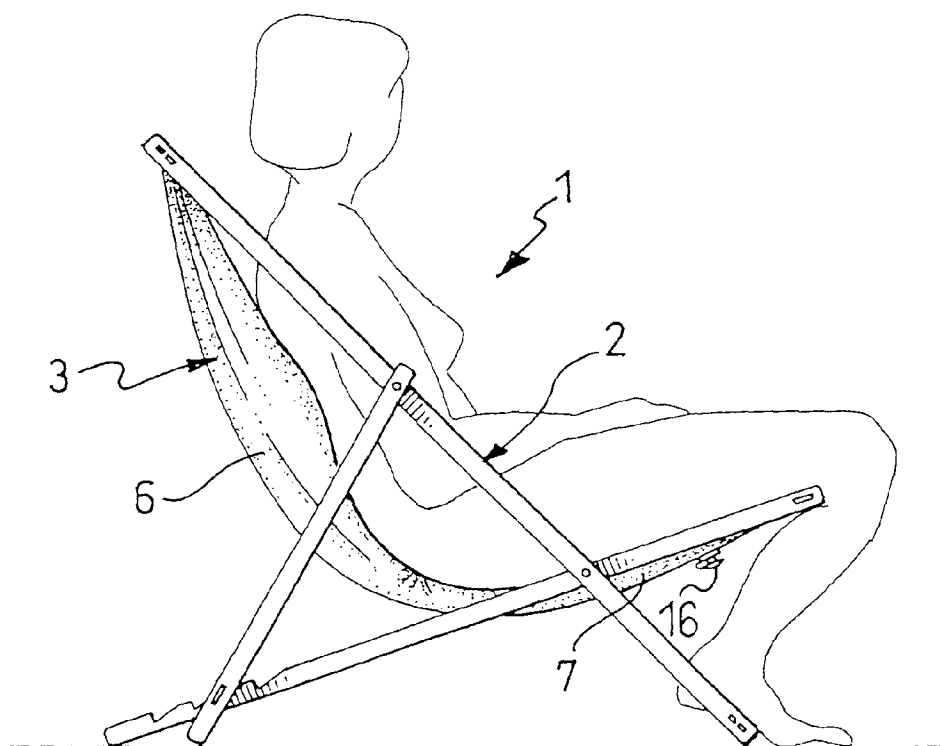


FIG.5

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Description

The present invention relates to a chair for the beach or garden or the like, of the type comprising a frame and a canvas-type supporting portion.

The chairs to which the present invention relates are particularly those intended for use on the beach and in the garden, but such chairs can also be used at the swimming pool, in open-air cinemas and generally in the context of any leisure occupation preferably in the open air.

These known chairs, though advantageous in many ways and therefore widely used, and particularly advantageous by virtue of being light, easy to handle and often foldable, nevertheless leave something to be desired from the health point of view as they oblige the user to adopt body positions that are anatomically very poor.

The problem targeted by the present invention is to devise a chair of the type specified having structural and functional characteristics such as to overcome the above drawback.

This problem is solved by a chair of the type specified, characterized in that the canvas-type portion is an inflatable envelope.

Other characteristics and advantages of the chair according to the present invention will emerge from the following description of a preferred embodiment given purely as a non-restrictive example, with reference to the accompanying figures, in which:

- Figure 1 is a side view of a chair according to the invention,
- Figure 2 is a side view of the chair of Figure 1 at another stage of its operation,
- Figure 3 is a side view of the chair of Figure 1 in yet another stage of its operation,
- Figure 4 is a side view on a larger scale of a detail of the chair of Figure 1, and
- Figure 5 is a sectional view on a much enlarged scale of another detail of the chair of Figure 1.

With reference to the accompanying figures, the numeral 1 is a general reference for a chair, known as a deckchair. The chair 1 comprises a frame 2, which in itself is conventional, and a canvas-type portion 3 for supporting a user.

To hold the canvas-type portion 3 in position, the frame 2 comprises two pairs of transverse bars, all marked numeral 4, which bars 4 of each pair are set close together so that a slot 5 is defined between them.

The canvas-type portion 3, which forms a backrest 6 and a seat 7, is an inflatable envelope 8 of rectangular shape, having long sides 9 and short sides 10. In particular, the envelope 8 includes a portion 8a that forms the backrest 6 and a portion 8b that forms the seat 7, these portions 8a and 8b being in fluid communication. Down each long side 9 the envelope 8 is of bellows construction, in this example a bellows with two folds.

Across each short side 10, the envelope 8 comprises an eyelet 11 in which a respective locking rod 12 is inserted, the dimensions of which are greater than those of the slot 5 so that it is held by a respective pair of bars 4. In this way the envelope is securely attached to the frame, both at the top of the backrest and at the front end of the seat, in much the same way as the conventional canvas-type portion, with which it is interchangeable.

The envelope 8 is made in the form of an impermeable and inextensible membrane 13 prepared from an appropriate plastic material, preferably polyvinyl chloride (PVC). As an alternative to the impermeability of the membrane, the envelope may of course contain an inner air chamber.

The membrane 13 has on its outer surface 14 in contact with the user, an irregular antiperspiration surface finish reproducing the weave of a fabric.

The membrane 13 preferably comprises a covering 15 made of a nontoxic material, for example a polyvinyl chloride (PVC) fabric attached to this membrane and preferably heat-bonded to it.

In order to inflate the envelope 8 as needed, a conventional valve 16 is provided on a long side 9 close to a short side 10. This valve may, for example, be of the type used for inflating the inner tubes of bicycle tyres with a pump, or more simply for inflating a dinghy or airbed with a bellows-type footpump.

In use, the user, having first inflated the envelope 8 with the appropriate amount of air, so that it is only partly inflated, sits in the chair 1, his or her weight pressing on the seat 7 and on the backrest 6. Because most of the weight is on the seat 7, the air inside the envelope 8 is pushed out of the seat 7 into the backrest 6 and presses the membrane 13 of the envelope against the user's back. In this way the backrest moulds itself exactly to the shape of the user's back, whether the latter is anatomically normal or marked by some greater or lesser malformation.

Tests have shown that under the pressure of the buttocks of the seated person, the air contained in the seat part of the envelope is pushed into the backrest, filling the dorso-lumbar and cervical regions of physiological lordosis. Simultaneously the air is removed from regions of dorsal kyphosis.

The total effect is of complete support for the vertebral column, which tends to straighten and assume a more physiological position.

Each user will inflate the envelope to a greater or lesser extent in order to gain the best support for his or her particular needs.

The main advantage of the chair according to the present invention is that it ensures that the body position of the user is anatomically correct. It is expected that with prolonged use a user with malformation of the vertebral column may find some benefit and improvement to his or her condition because the chair according to the present invention would seem to be indicated for and

recommendable in cases of back pain that benefit from lumbar and cervical support.

Another advantage of the chair according to the present invention is that it has also been found to be very comfortable and agreeable in use.

Another advantage of the chair according to the present invention is that it is structurally simple, which is no small advantage for a product intended to be mass-produced.

Another advantage of the chair according to the invention is that it is also hygienically advantageous, as it is suited to being made from nontoxic materials. The invention also has the important advantage that it can easily be put into effect on existing chairs: the inflatable envelope is fully interchangeable with the conventional canvas-type portions normally used. The user can even choose which is the most convenient position for the valve, simply by arranging the envelope in the frame with its short side, near which the valve is located, positioned either in the seat part or in the backrest part.

Obviously, a person skilled in the art will be able to make many modifications and variations to the chair described above in order to meet local and specific needs, all such alterations being contained within the scope of protection of the invention as defined in the following claims.

Claims

1. Chair (1) for the beach or garden or the like, of the type comprising a frame (2) and a canvas-type supporting portion (3), characterized in that the canvas-type portion (3) is an inflatable envelope (8).
2. Chair (1) according to Claim 1, characterized in that the inflatable envelope (8) includes a portion (8a) that forms a backrest (6).
3. Chair (1) according to Claim 2, characterized in that the inflatable envelope (8) includes a portion (8b) that forms a seat (7), said portion (8b) being in fluid communication with the portion (8a) that forms a backrest.
4. Chair (1) according to Claim 3, characterized in that the inflatable envelope (8) is made from an impermeable inextensible membrane (13).
5. Chair (1) according to Claim 4, characterized in that the membrane (13) is made from a plastic material, preferably polyvinyl chloride (PVC).
6. Chair (1) according to Claim 5, characterized in that the membrane (13) has an outer surface (14) with an irregular antiperspiration surface finish.
7. Chair (1) according to Claim 6, characterized in that

the surface finish reproduces the weave of a fabric.

8. Chair (1) according to Claim 7, characterized in that it comprises a fabric covering (15) made of a plastic material, preferably polyvinyl chloride (PVC), attached to the membrane (13).
9. Chair (1) according to Claim 8, characterized in that the envelope (8) is approximately rectangular, with long sides (9) and short sides (10).
10. Chair (1) according to Claim 9, characterized in that the long sides (9) are of bellows construction.
11. Chair (1) according to Claim 10, characterized in that it comprises eyelets (11) formed along the short sides (10) and locking rods (12) inserted in the eyelets (11) and held by pairs of bars (4) set close together in the frame (2).
12. Inflatable envelope (8) for use as the canvas-type supporting portion (3) of a chair (1) for the beach or garden or the like.

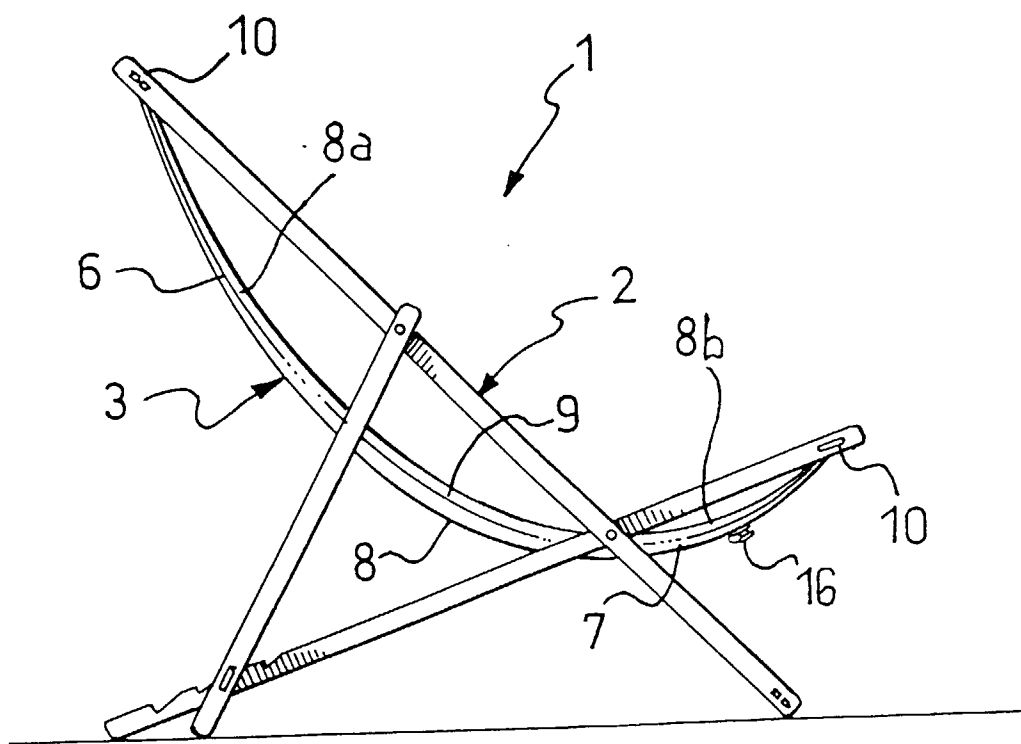


FIG.1

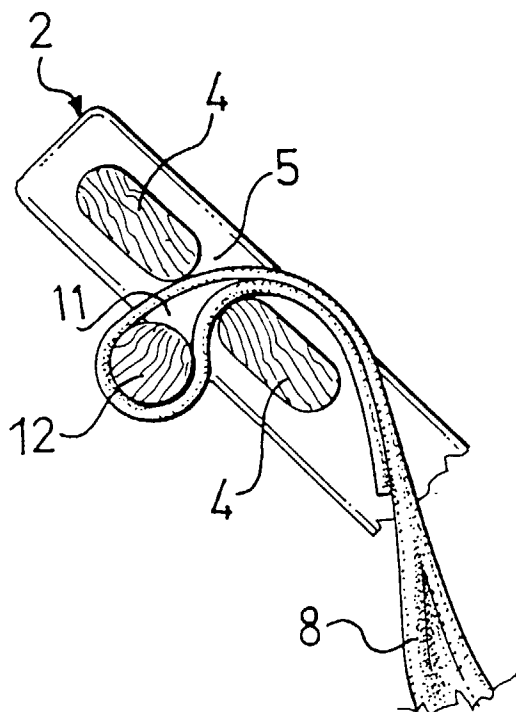


FIG.2

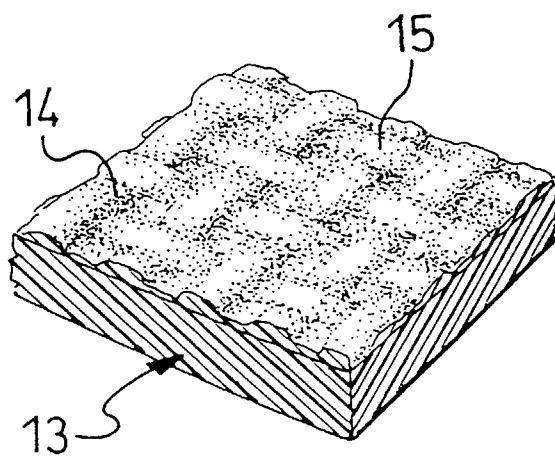


FIG.3

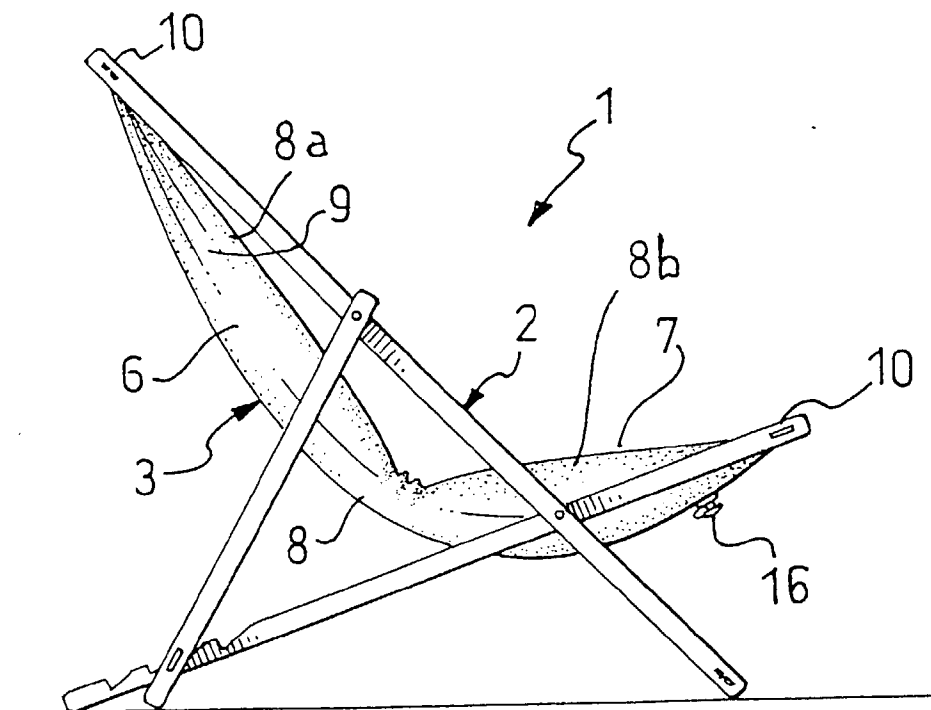


FIG. 4

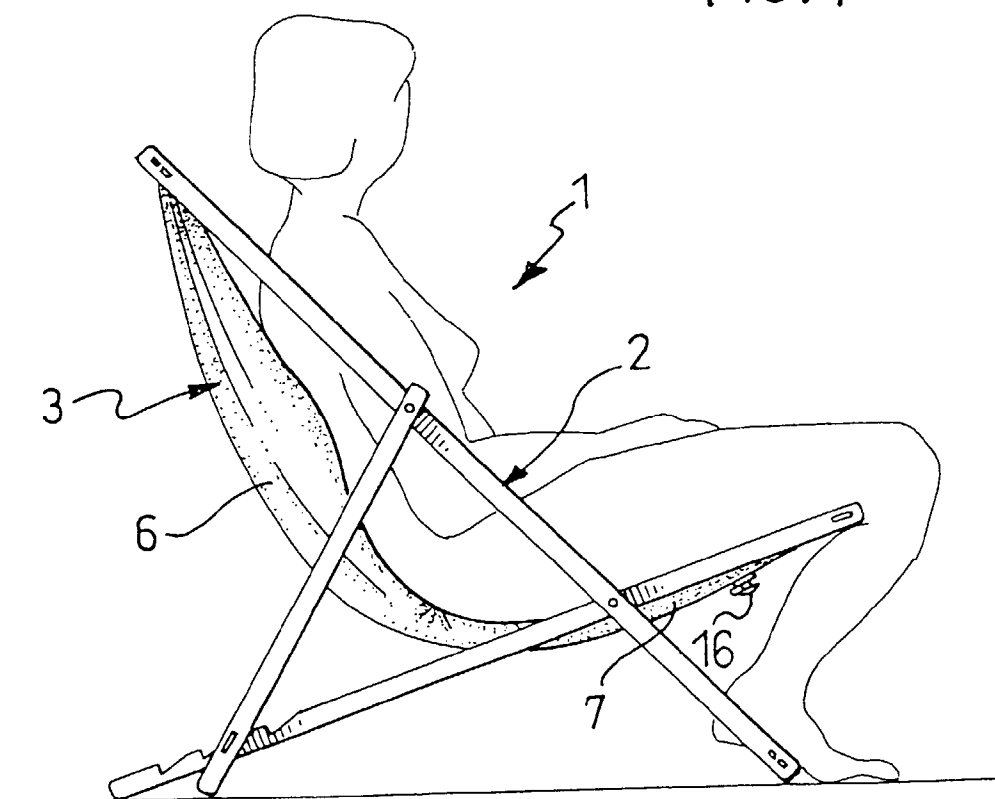


FIG. 5



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 97 20 0127

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
A	GB 2 124 481 A (TIPALDI) * figures 1,4 * ---	1	A47C1/14 A47C4/40 A47C27/08
A	US 3 499 682 A (ORENSTEIN) * figures 1-3,5 * ---	1	
A	GB 962 694 A (FREEDMAN) * figures 1,2 * -----	1	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
			A47C
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 4 April 1997	Examiner Mysliwetz, W
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